

## Resolution on Restrictions on Teachers' Civil and Political Rights in the Republic of Korea

The 9th Education International Asia-Pacific Regional Conference, meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 18–20 October 2022:

- (1) Reaffirming that the Republic of Korea, as a member of the UN and ILO, has a strong obligation to protect the human rights of citizens and respect fundamental international standards;
- (2) Noting that teachers' political rights and freedom of political expressions as a citizen are comprehensively banned even after school hours, while students aged above 16 are fully guaranteed to join a political party, pay party dues, and students aged 18 can run for public office under the newly revised *Public Official Election Act*;
- (3) Recalling Article 80 of the *1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers* stating that 'teachers should be free to exercise all civic rights generally enjoyed by citizens and should be eligible for public office';
- (4) Recalling the statement of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) in 2021 that 'insofar as political activities undertaken by elementary, primary and secondary school teachers are held outside of the school establishment and are unrelated to teaching, a general prohibition of political activities . . . constitute discrimination on the ground of political opinion, contrary to the Convention';
- (5) Welcoming the National Human Rights Commission of Korea's recommendation in 2019 that the Government should revise the relevant law so that public officials and teachers can be guaranteed their basic political rights as citizens in terms of human rights protection;
- (6) Noting with concern that despite the reiterated urges of the ILO Committees, the Government of the Republic of Korea has not taken any concrete measure to ensure that school teachers enjoy their political activities and freedom of political expressions;



(7) The 9th EIAP Regional Conference:

- (i) mandates the EIAP Regional Committee to write a letter to the Government requesting once again to take the immediate action to fully guarantee teachers' civil and political rights as a citizen in South Korea;
- (ii) strongly urges the Government of the Republic of Korea to amend the relevant legislation to ensure that teachers and civil servants exercise their civil and political rights, in conformity with international standards; and
- (iii) also requests the Government of the Republic of Korea to immediately cancel any disciplinary measure against teachers and public officials who engage in political activities, which is not in compliance with the fundamental international standards.